

Henry
224 East ~~Duffy~~ Street
Savannah Victorian Historic District
Savannah
Chatham County
Georgia

GA-1169 U

HABS,
GA,
26-SAV,
53U-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. GA-1169 U

SAVANNAH VICTORIAN HISTORIC DISTRICT
224 EAST HENRY STREET

Location: 224 East Henry Street, north side of street,
Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia.

Present Owner: Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project,
P.O. Box 8801, Savannah, Georgia 31412.

Present Occupants: Tenants.

Present Use: Apartments.

Significance: This is one of the few mansard-roofed structures in
the Victorian District. It features fine plaster-
work and retains its original ice cellar. The house
is to be restored as a part of Savannah Landmark's
program to provide rehabilitated housing for the
low income residents in the Victorian District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1881. While the 1881 Tax Digest lists no improvements on this lot, the 1882 Tax Digest lists improvements valued at \$4,500, indicating that the structure was built in 1881.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original owner: John O. Smith. The house stands on a section of lot 68 and 69, White Ward.
4. Builder: John O. Smith, contractor, carpenter and builder. Additional structures built by Smith include 218 East Henry Street and the J.A.G. Carson House, a frame Queen Anne house which stood on Bolton Street and is now demolished.
5. Original plan and construction. The Savannah Morning News reported on December 12, 1880:

"Lot soon to be made attractive...three two story frame tenements with mansard roof, owned by J.O. Smith, who will build."

The Morning News followed up on December 17, stating:

"The vacant lot, corner of Henry and Lincoln Streets will soon be rendered attractive by three two story (sic) frame tenements with mansard roof. The lot is the property of Mr. J.O. Smith who proposes building these houses for rent or sale."
(Savannah Morning News 12-17-1880 3/2).

Continuing to report on the progress of the house's construction, the paper printed on February 18, 1881:

"On Henry, Corner of Lincoln, Mr. J.O. Smith is erecting three three story frame dwellings of modern design, bay windows, novel portico, and mansard roofs."
(Savannah Morning News 2-18-1881 3/4).

6. Alterations and additions: The front (south) porch has been extended around the west corner of the house. The house has been converted into three apartments, one on each floor. During this conversion the stair was enclosed. The rear porch was enclosed to make a kitchen and breakfast room. A hall room has been added on the second floor over the foyer.

For background information see Savannah Victorian Historic District, HABS No. GA-1169.

C. Bibliography:

Savannah Morning News, on microfilm, Georgia Historical Society.

Prepared by: Beth Lattimore Reiter
Project Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
September 24, 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: 224 East Henry Street is one of a row of three identical mansard roofed structures built by prominent Savannah builder John O. Smith. The houses are characterized by handsome interior plasterwork and polychrome roof tiles.

2. Condition of fabric: Fair; a leak in the roof has caused considerable water damage.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The three-story structure measures 25'-6" (three-bay front) X 46' deep with a projecting front bay (5' X 10').
2. Foundations: Gray brick pier construction with spaced infill on south foundation. The foundations are open at the sides but a few of the bays have been filled in with corrugated metal. Approximately 10' from the rear, the foundations have been dug out and lined with brick for an ice cellar.
3. Wall construction: Clapboard siding covered with cement asbestos siding.
4. Structural system: Wood frame construction.
5. Porches, stoops: The one-story wooden front entrance porch, one bay wide, is approached by five concrete steps. Square columns with sawn scroll work infill support a star-patterned frieze and bracketed cornice. This porch was considered a novel design when it was originally constructed. The porch has been extended to the west and north, and a metal awning has been added.
6. Chimneys: A stuccoed brick chimney rises from the east side of the mansard roof, and one rises between the common wall of the two rear rooms.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The front entrance has been converted into two doorways, one for the upper-level apartments and one for the first floor. The entranceway is topped by a denticulated three-light transom, framed by a heavily molded surround. The doors are wood with glass in the upper half and three raised wooden panels below.
 - b. Windows and shutters: The windows are two-over-two-light double hung sash topped by a molded cornice. On the south elevation is a polygonal one-story bay window with raised panels beneath the windows. Shutter hooks remain, but all shutters have been removed.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Mansard roof with a patterned polychrome slate covering. The slates are cut in halved circular-, diamond-, octagonal- and square-edged butts, and are grey, red and green, laid to form a repetitive pattern.
- b. Cornice, eaves: A bracketed cornice protects a wide frieze.
- c. Dormers: Segmental-arched dormers with two-over-two-light windows are located on the south and east elevations.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Approximately ten feet has been excavated for use as a cold room or ice cellar under the rear porch and the rear section of the house. A rear central entrance flanked by a window on either side has subsequently been removed.
- b. First floor: Side hall plan, three rooms deep. The back porch has been enclosed for use as a kitchen and breakfast room. A bathroom has been created by enclosing the rear section of the hall.
- c. Second floor: Side hall plan, similar to that of the first floor.
- d. Third floor: Side hall plan, identical to that of the second floor.

2. Stairways: A single enclosed flight is fitted with an octagonal newel and balusters.

3. Flooring: Pine floors throughout, some of which have been painted in recent years. Vinyl floor covers the third-floor bath.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster walls and ceilings. All rooms are trimmed with picture moldings and baseboards. The stair well between the first and second floors has been paneled with narrow beaded vertical siding.

5. Opening:

- a. Doorways and doors: On the first floor there are four-panel sliding double doors between the parlors. Second and third-floor openings have four-panel doors set into wide deeply molded frames topped by transoms.

- b. Windows: The windows are also set into wide heavily molded frames. There are two-over-two-light windows on the stairs between the second and third floor. Third-floor dormer windows are framed by molded trim above the window and below, but not on the sides.
- 6. Decorative features and trim: There are decorative plaster ceiling medallions in the first and third rooms on the first floor. There is also a decorative plaster cornice although it has been damaged in places.

The first-floor mantel in the front parlor is wood with an arched opening and a cartouche in the center of the arch. The shelf is shaped. The mantel in the middle room also has an arched opening. The shaped shelf is supported by fluted pilasters and brackets. The mantel in the back room has an arched opening with cartouche and spandrels.

The second-floor mantels are all alike. They are wood with a cast-iron arched coal grate with spandrels. Plain pilasters support a shaped shelf. There is a gothic arch between the pilasters. There are no fireplaces on the third floor.

7. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating, ventilation: The house was originally heated by coal-burning fireplaces and later by gas space heaters vented through the chimneys. Electric wall heaters are use at present. Second- and third-story doors have transoms for ventilation.
- b. Lighting: There is evidence of gas wall fixtures, but none remain. The house is now lighted by electricity and the early knob-and-tube wiring is still in use.

D. Site:

The house faces south and is situated on the lot line. A one-story garage stands in the rear yard. A street planting separates the sidewalk from the street.

Prepared by: Beth Lattimore Reiter
Project Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
October 13, 1979

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the City of Savannah, the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, Inc., and Historic Savannah Foundation. The recording project was completed during the summer of 1979 under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect; Eric Delony, Project Coordinator, Savannah Landmark Rehabilitation Project, Inc.; and Susan Dornbusch, Project Supervisor, University of Virginia; with student architects Gregori Anderson (Howard University), David Fixler (Columbia University), Stephen Lauf (Temple University), and Tamara Peacock (University of Florida), at the HABS Office in Savannah, Georgia. The drawings were edited in the Washington office in September 1979 by architects Susan Dornbusch and Gregori Anderson. The historical and architectural data was reviewed and edited during October-November 1979 by staff historian Jan Cigliano. Photographs were taken in September 1979 by Walter Smalling, a staff photographer with the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. The documentation on the historic district will be used in the rehabilitation of the residences and in developing design guidelines for the area.